

The Brooklyn Paper

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SEALED WITH A KISS

Ratner, mayor, ACORN, agree on housing plan



Bertha Lewis, executive director of the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN), kisses Mayor Michael Bloomberg at Borough Hall.

By Jess Wisloski

The Brooklyn Papers

A deal binding a community organization to developer Bruce Ratner's contentious Atlantic Yards project, anticipated since last fall, has finally arrived.

The pact, between Ratner and ACORN, a national organization, was sealed — literally — with a kiss.

ACORN Executive Director Bertha Lewis planted wet ones on both Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Ratner at a media event staged in Brooklyn Borough Hall on May 19. Lewis, Bloomberg and Ratner declined to answer most questions. Ratner hopes to build a basketball arena and 17 office and housing high-rises on 24 acres of property stretching east into Prospect Heights from the intersection of Atlantic and Flatbush avenues.

The actual signing of the agreement, which was written as a memorandum of understanding, will not take place until after various governmental actions are taken that are necessary for the Atlantic Yards project to proceed.

Bloomberg said the city would fund a "50-50" affordable housing scheme on the Ratner site that would allow half of the proposed 4,500 residential units to be reserved for what has been described as low-, moderate- and middle-income renters.

The other half of the six-block stretch would be rented at market rate. Shaun Donovan, commissioner of the Department of Housing Preservation and Development, said a 50-30-20 structure was contemplated, with the 20 percent being low-income units, 30 percent moderate and 50 percent market-rate.



Lewis, who at Borough Hall last week cemented her new role as a community advocate for Bruce Ratner's Atlantic Yards project, also kisses the developer.

ACORN — an acronym for the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now — would be responsible for processing applications for the low-, moderate- and middle-income units. ACORN's activities would be monitored by HPD, Donovan said.

No overall price tag was assigned at the Borough Hall event to the city's pledge, although it was stated that the Housing Development Corporation, a city housing fund, might alone be on the hook for \$67.5 million in subsidies.

"Developments [like the] one we envision at the Atlantic Yards, become ever more important as our city's housing prices continue to rise almost exponentially," said Bloomberg.

"We've all read the stories: Our red-hot real estate market shows that our economy is growing, but it's also a mixed blessing, because as housing becomes more expensive, more longtime residents are getting priced out of their own neighborhoods," said Bloomberg to a chorus of support from backers of the project who attended the event.

"We know, if you give people economic incentives to do things, they respond the way they should be," said Bloomberg, who congratulated Borough President Marty Markowitz for promoting Ratner's project.

The incentive for Ratner is an expectation that the HDC will offer him 1-percent tax-exempt mortgages for the construction of the project's moderate-income units.

"HDC adds up to \$45,000 a unit to subsidize construction of the moderate-income units," explained HPD's Donovan, whose agency would implement HDC funding. "Just like tax-exempt bonds have a lower interest rate, we give a 1-percent mortgage — up to \$45,000 per unit in exchange for the developer to charge moderate-level rents."

The 20 percent for low- and very low-income rentals are subsidized with low-interest-rate, tax-exempt bonds and tax credits, said HDC spokeswoman Tracy Panowski.

"This agreement represents the first time that this concept of 50-50 has been implemented in a private agreement by a private developer in a project of this scale," Lewis said at Borough Hall. "And it represents the first time that ACORN's tiered income concept has been implemented on such a large scale."

According to the memorandum of understanding, 50 percent of the 2,250 low-market units will consist of studio and one-bedroom units.

See **MTA BIDDERS** on page 5

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MTA opens bidding on rail yards site

By Jess Wisloski

The Brooklyn Papers

If you want to build something other than a basketball arena and skyscrapers over the Atlantic Avenue rail yards, this is your chance.

But judging from the bidding over the Hudson Yards in Manhattan earlier this year, you'd better have several-hundred million dollars.

The ear of the mayor and governor wouldn't hurt.

And you'd better work quickly — the proposals are due July 6.

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority quietly issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) this week seeking bids for development rights over its Long Island Rail Road storage yards near Atlantic and Flatbush avenues, where developer Bruce Ratner wants to build a 19,000-seat basketball arena and four skyscrapers.

The RFP invites proposals for "the sale or lease of all or some of the air space and related real property interests" in one or

more of three parcels of the rail yards, properly called the Vanderbilt Yards, which sit between Atlantic Avenue and Pacific Street, from Fifth Avenue to Vanderbilt Avenue in Prospect Heights.

The three parcels are 100,000 square feet, 119,000 square feet, and 148,000 square feet, and the complete guidelines are available on the MTA's Web site, www.mta.info.

Although MTA spokesman Tom Kelly had told The Brooklyn Papers in previous interviews that anybody who wanted to

could bid on the MTA property, the RFP was the first public attempt the agency has made to solicit bids there.

"An RFP makes sure that everybody and his mother knows about it, and they can bid if they want," Kelly explained this week. "It opens up the entire process to anyone who would be interested in bidding."

"The purpose is to see who else is interested in the property," he said.

The cash-strapped MTA, which faces a massive budget deficit and has threatened service cutbacks and fare hikes is under

great public pressure to seek top-dollar for the Vanderbilt Yards.

Since Ratner's Forest City Ratner Companies announced plans to build a professional basketball arena and 17 residential and commercial high-rises emanating from Atlantic and Flatbush avenues out to Vanderbilt Avenue in December 2003, no official bids have come forward, according to the MTA. Neither has Forest City Ratner offered a public bid on the development rights over the rail yards.

Four die as plane crashes in Coney

By Michael Weissenstein

Associated Press

Four people were killed Saturday afternoon when a single-engine plane crashed on the beach in Coney Island, hitting the sand as stunned sunbathers looked on, officials said.

The victims, all on board the Cessna 172S, were dead at the scene following the 1:30 p.m. crash, said Federal Aviation Administration spokeswoman Holly Baker. Police and fire officials were at the scene, where the shattered white aircraft remained on the beach about halfway between the Atlantic Ocean and the boardwalk.

Eyewitnesses said the plane was circling above Coney Island when its engine suddenly stalled, and the aircraft quickly plunged into the beach.

The pilot tried desperately to right the 4-year-old plane after it went into a tailspin, said Herbert Lecker, 51, who was fishing on the beach.

"He couldn't, and he bounced on that beach," said Lecker.

Joshua McCabe, a registered nurse visiting from San Diego, was eating inside Nathan's Famous hot dog restaurant when he heard the crash. McCabe and another witness rushed to the scene, where they found the pilot already dead and a female passenger barely alive.

Within seconds, he said, "she wasn't breathing and then she lost her pulse."

Dick Zigun, a longtime Coney Island resident who was at the crash site, said it looked like the plane had come down nose-first.

"The wings are broken off, and the cockpit glass was smashed up,"

he said. "It didn't look like anyone could survive that."

Zigun said it was the first plane crash on the beach that he could recall. Several sunbathers were on the beach when the plane came down, although the Coney Island crowd was generally sparse, he said.

Police and fire officials moved quickly to close off the beach after the crash. Dozens of people were gathered along the boardwalk staring out at the wreckage, which was in sight of the Wonder Wheel attraction.

There were no injuries on the ground.

The crash occurred on a sunny spring day at the world-renowned beach, home to the Cyclone roller-coaster and the Astrad amusement park. The plane hit the beach near West 19th Street, close to Key-Span Park.



Officials look over wreckage of the single-engine Cessna 172S, which crashed on Coney Island beach Sunday, killing the pilot and three passengers on the sightseeing flight. No one on the ground was injured.

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Boyfriend makes bad impression on her dad

By Jess Wisloski
 The Brooklyn Papers

A man struck the father of his date on the head with a trophy May 18 in the victim's Brooklyn Heights home. Police say the father, 53, was attempting to intervene in a dispute between his daughter and boyfriend in the apartment on Livingston Street near Court Street that began at 8:45 pm.

84/76 BLOTTER

When the father stepped in, the younger man, 26, became infuriated and, grabbing a trophy, bashed the dad over the head, according to police. The victim suffered a cut to his forehead and bruising to his hands, but did not seek medical treatment because he wanted to make sure the boyfriend was arrested.

The suspect was arrested by Police Officer Diana Mooney of the 84th Precinct and faces charges of assault with intent to cause serious injury. A food deliveryman had \$250 and his cell phone stolen from him in the vestibule of a Boerum Hill apartment building on May 19.

The victim, 41, told police he was in the process of making a delivery at 11 pm on Bergen Street near Nevins Street.

When he entered the vestibule, he was approached by a man, 20 to 25 years of age, about 5-foot-9 and 160 pounds, in a green T-shirt, who displayed a black, automatic handgun.

A second man, described as about 5-foot-10 and 210 pounds, then appeared. Demanding the victim's money and cellular phone, the second man saw to it that the victim turned over the \$250 he had in his pockets, as well as his cellular phone, the victim told police.

A canvass of the area with the victim turned up no results but police are investigating. **9 am mugging**
 A mugger in Boerum Hill held up a woman at knifepoint on May 19.

The victim, 59, told police she was approached by a strange man between 9 am and 9:45 am on Pacific Street near Boerum Place, who tried to corner her near her own building.

"I'm looking for my friend," the man said nonchalantly, just before whipping out a knife.

Through the victim screamed, and tried to push her attacker away, he snatched three necklaces from her neck before fleeing northbound on Boerum Place towards Atlantic Avenue.

At the time of the report, the victim did not know the value of all three chains.

Double cross
 Two muggers robbed a man of his gold necklace and crucifix pendant in Boerum Hill on May 18.

The victim told police he was walking along State Street at 3:45 pm near Third Avenue, when two men ran up to him from behind. The first stranger pulled out a black revolver and demanded the victim's necklace. The second man served as a lookout.

The victim, a Bronx man, handed over the necklace and the two thieves fled. **Blink of an eye**
 A burglar struck a jackpot of sorts when he looted a DUMBO studio that had been left unattended for only 10 minutes on May 17.

The victim told police that more than \$3,000 worth of computer and video equipment was taken in the blink of an eye between 12:30 pm and 12:40 pm from the victim's

apartment on Jay Street near Plymouth Street.

The victim told police he had left the apartment door locked and thought it was fully shut behind him when he stepped out briefly to run an errand. But upon his return, he noticed the door was slightly ajar, and the property missing.

There were no signs of forced entry, say police. The victim, 30, reported stolen a Canon video camera, valued at \$1,500 missing, as well as a Macintosh computer valued at \$1,574.

Purse grab
 A robber walked into the apartment building of a Boerum Hill woman who had left her front door propped open with a baby stroller and swiped the victim's tote bag on her way out on May 13.

The victim, 36, told police she had left the front door of her Boerum Place apartment building open at 10:30 am, when an unknown woman walked into the building near Dean Street.

"Oh, I'm sorry," said the woman innocently. "I thought this was a daycare center."

Undercover
 Thieves broke into a parked private surveillance vehicle in Brooklyn Heights on May 17 and made off with more than \$2,500 in electronics equipment and various security devices.

The break-in occurred around 7 pm, according to the victim, who lives a block away from where the black 2004 Suburban SUV was

parked. When the victim, who conducts business investigations, responded to his car alarm, he discovered it was too late.

According to the man's police report, an unknown person broke into the car by way of the rear window, and removed various items, including an \$800 camcorder, a \$100 cellular phone, a \$200 battery charger, \$310 worth of booklets, an \$800 tracking device, \$35 cellular phone, a \$250 "flashlight drill" and various tools worth \$250.

Nab health nut
 A health-conscious mugger who attacked a Cobble Hill man for his wallet and milk-thistle herbal supplement on May 18 was arrested for robbery.

The victim, 30, told police the stranger mugged him, asking for his wallet, at 1:20 pm on Court Street near Amity Street.

The mugger approached as he was trying to cross the street, and began pushing the victim against his car door. After being robbed, the victim was able to flag down police attention, and 84th Precinct Police Officer Richard Hare, who happened to be

See **COPS** on page 3

LEGAL NOTICES

Notice of Formation of RSC, LLC. Articles of Org. filed with Secy of State of NY (SSNY) on 5/17/05. Office location: Kings County, SSNY designated as agent of LLC, upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to RSC-LLC, 8815 19 Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11214. Purpose: Any lawful act or activity. (8/22)

City Realty LLC, Notice of Formation of LLC. Liability Co. Name: City Realty LLC, Articles of Org. filed with Secy of State of NY (SSNY) on 5/17/05. Office location: Kings County, SSNY designated as agent of LLC, upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to City Realty LLC, 1312 44th St., Suite 121, Bklyn, NY 11219. Purpose: Any lawful act or activity. (8/22)

Notice is hereby given that an Order entered by the Civil Court, Kings County on the 18th day of May, 2005, bearing the Index Number 05002005, a copy of which may be examined at the Office of the Clerk, located at CHIL COURT, 1095 COURT, 141 Livingston Street, Brooklyn, New York 11201, in room 007, grants the right to Assume the name of Oscar Samuels. My present name is: Mohammed Mustafic Kadir Mohammed Mustafic. My present address is: 385 Lefferts Street, Brooklyn, New York 11212. My date of birth is: Brooklyn, New York. My date of birth is: July 31, 1984. (8/22)

Notice is hereby given that an Order entered by the Civil Court, Kings County on the 18th day of May, 2005, bearing the Index Number 05002005, a copy of which may be examined at the Office of the Clerk, located at CHIL COURT, 1095 COURT, 141 Livingston Street, Brooklyn, New York 11201, in room 007, grants a minor the right to assume the name of Kymora Tignor Tignor. The present address of the minor is: 204 Eldon Street, Apt. 5, Brooklyn, New York 11201. The date of her birth is: February 1, 2000. The minor was born in Brookdale Hospital in Brooklyn, New York. Her present name is: Kymora Tignor. (8/22)

Notice is hereby given that an Order entered by the Civil Court, Kings County on the 18th day of May, 2005, bearing the Index Number 05002005, a copy of which may be examined at the Office of the Clerk, located at CHIL COURT, 1095 COURT, 141 Livingston Street, Brooklyn, New York 11201, in room 007, grants the right to Assume the name of: Ashlee Janine Preston. My present name is: Ashlee Janine Preston. My present address is: Ashlee Janine Preston, 428 Brooklyn, NY 11221. My date of birth is: Bronx, NY. My date of birth is: July 25, 1991. (8/22)


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Daylight mugs on Fulton Mall



Seal of approval

On a sunny spring day, Otis the sea lion gets his back scratched by trainer Martha during feeding time at the New York Aquarium in Coney Island.

By Jess Wisloski
The Brooklyn Papers

Daylight muggings are on the rise on Fulton Mall downtown, according to police reports.

Although the busy shopping strip is frequently a hive of activity for neglected or forgotten property and pickpocket or shoplifting reports, this week, reports from the 84th Precinct suggested a rise in full-on robberies.

Muggers attacked a young man, 15, at midday on his way to the Hoyt Street subway station on May 19.

The victim told police he was on the southeast corner of

Fulton Mall and Hoyt Street at 3:20 pm when he was approached by a stranger who seemed to be the ringleader of a group of thugs.

"Run your pockets," said the man.

When the victim refused to empty his pockets, the stranger punched him on both sides of his face.

Another of the strangers kicked the victim, who fell to the ground, before the group fled to parts unknown.

The victim reported the incident to police officers working nearby.

In another incident, a thief snatched a woman's purse as she walked down Bond Street

near Fulton Mall at 9 am on April 29.

Though the victim told police she was walking alone with her pocketbook in one hand, before the thief approached her, she waited until May 17 to report the incident for unknown reasons.

According to the report, as she walked down the street the perpetrator yanked the purse from her hand and fled down Bond Street.

On May 16, a mugger approached a man at the corner of Fulton and Bond streets at 2 pm and after demanding he hand over his property, made off with the man's wallet and cellular phone.

Hook laundry bandit caught

The Brooklyn Papers

A would-be bandit picked the wrong target when he tried to clean out a Laundromat in Red Hook on May 23.

Not only did the owner fight him off, he also helped local officers of the Red Hook Community Justice Center apprehend him, say police.

The 26-year-old owner of the coin-op laundry on Var Brunt Street near Visitation Place told police he was working at 9:15 am when the stranger came in.

"Give me everything you've got," said the robber, who pulled out an automatic handgun.

The bandit reportedly hit the owner twice with the gun, directing his victim to enter a back room. Then the victim started screaming and a man came into the laundry to try and help him. But the gunman managed to evade fire, and took off. The laundry owner gave chase towards Visitation Place where the community courthouse is located. Two court officers heard the ruckus and joined the pursuit.

The drug tossed his 25-caliber handgun, which was later retrieved by police.

Two blocks later, one of the officers tackled the gunman, and Police Officer Melanie Smith, of the 76th Precinct, made the arrest.

Roper quits Hynes race

By Jotham Sederstrom
The Brooklyn Papers

Attorney Sandra Roper announced Tuesday that she is dropping out of the race for Brooklyn district attorney and will instead vie for one of two county-wide civil court judgeships.

Roper, who reaped 37 percent of the vote during a run against incumbent District Attorney Charles Hynes in 2001, cited dwindling funds as her reason for bowing out less than four months before a crowded Democratic primary.

"With my exit, I am confident that this cause that I began at grave personal peril in 2001, will be accomplished by one of my fellow candidates

— to bring fundamental justice to the Brooklyn DA's office, free from the taint of self-serving politics," Roper said at a well-attended May 24 candidates forum at the Brooklyn House of the Lord Church, on Atlantic Avenue at Nevins Street in Boerum Hill.

Until March, Roper had faced charges that she had defrauded an elderly client of nearly \$9,000 after agreeing to represent her free of charge in a dispute with a lending firm.

While the charges emanated from a complaint brought to Hynes' office, a special prosecutor was assigned the case in December 2001 due to the adversarial political relationship between the DA and Roper. A trial ended in a hung jury in

November 2004. Then in March, as she was about to be re-tried, Roper agreed to pay back the former client, Mary Lee Ward, in exchange for the criminal charges against her being dropped.

Roper still faces the possibility of being disbarred if found by an Appellate Division disciplinary committee to have lied on three separate occasions while representing Ward.

In announcing she would no longer seek to challenge Hynes, Roper blamed lawyers fees and lengthy court appearances that she said made it difficult to wage a competitive campaign against Hynes, let alone the other five candidates.

A spokesman for Hynes' campaign this week issued a statement affirming that the DA had nothing to do with Roper's prosecution, despite her allegations that the case was politically motivated.

"Ms. Roper was not prosecuted by this office, but by an independent special prosecutor appointed by the court system," said Hynes campaign spokesman Mortimer Matz. "The special prosecutor pre-

sented the case to the grand jury, which indicted and then handled the trial."

Unlike other press conferences she has held since first announcing her candidacy in January, Roper injected race as a central issue Tuesday night, which the mostly black audience members responded to with shouts of "That's right," and "Mmm humm."

"Hynes had me arrested as I sat with a handcuffed young black man — that same demographic that I had tried to help keep out of jail over my many years as an NAACP civil rights attorney," Roper said twice during her announcement.

Hynes did all this through the weight of his office that the Brooklyn electorate had bestowed upon him. This is constitutionally and morally offensive."

Matz denied Roper's claim that Hynes "had me arrested."

"At no time did this office ever arrest Ms. Roper, or ever prosecute Ms. Roper," he said.

Roper said that she would not endorse any of the five remaining challengers.

Hynes still faces challenges from Arnold Kris, a former legal counsel for the police department; Braxton Fenner, a trial attorney; state Sen. John Sampson; Mark Peters, a former prosecutor under Attorney General Eliot Spitzer; and Paul Wooten, a former assistant district attorney and counsel to the New York State Black and Puerto Rican legislation caucus.

COPS

Continued from page 2

passing through the 76th Precinct at the time, apprehended the 26-year-old mugger, and recovered the stolen wallet with \$84 still in it. The victim also had his herbal supplement returned.

Luquer St. burglary

A burglar crawled through the kitchen window of a Carroll Gardens apartment the morning of May 9 and stole various items of clothing and jewelry.

The victim, 29, told police that the thief must have entered his Luquer Street apartment near Clinton Street sometime between 10 am, when he went to work, and 7 pm, when he arrived home.

The burglar made off with a \$250 television set, a cable box, an engagement ring valued at \$1,100, three watches valued at \$300, ten pairs of pants, totaling \$400, and five football jerseys worth \$1,000, as well as a blender and food processor worth \$200 together.

Robbed

Burglars made off with more than \$7,000 worth of personal items belonging to an employee of a wholesale plywood company in Red Hook overnight on May 19.

Police say the victim, 35, left his property inside an office in the building at Smith Street at the corner of Hamilton Avenue, which was secured on May 19 at 7 pm.

When the victim returned to the site the next day at 7 am, however, he found the front door ajar, and his property gone.

Among the things reported stolen was a camcorder worth \$600, a wallet with credit cards inside, a man's watch, a backpack, \$1,838 in cash, an Apple laptop computer valued at \$3,000, and an IBM laptop valued at \$1,800.

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Cops nab half of mugging duo

By Jess Wisloski
The Brooklyn Papers

Police have arrested a 17-year-old girl they believe to be half of a Bonnie-and-Clyde duo that has robbed several women in Park Slope at gunpoint over the past two weeks.

Three of four heists attributed to the pair were reported by The Brooklyn Papers last week.

In each instance, the two struck at night, cornering women in their late 20s who were walking or sitting by themselves.

The script carried out by the two went as follows: The woman would often ask for the time in order to distract her female prey.

Then, as the man stood guard, sometimes with a gun, the woman would accost the victim, and remove any property she could.

What helped lead to the female perpetrator's arrest was the latest victim's bravery and ingenuity.

The woman, 28, told police she was approached by the duo at 10:20 pm on May 15 on Berkeley Place near Sixth Avenue, which fit within the small radius where the two had performed at least three other muggings.

"Give me everything," the woman demanded of the victim, and the man, who stood behind her, pointed a black firearm at the victim's feet.

The victim complied with the request, and handed over her keys and debit card.

Once "Bonnie" had the victim's bankcard, "Clyde" demanded her personal identification number to access the account.

"Give me your PIN number," he barked. The victim told police she hesitated for a moment.

"Shoot her in the head," demanded the woman, and the victim hastily made up a fictitious access number for the ATM card.

Soon after the encounter, police caught up with the fe-

78 PCT. BLOTTER

male half of the duo on Flatbush Avenue near Clermont Avenue in Prospect Heights. The suspect faces charges including robbery in the second degree, criminal possession of a weapon with intent to cause physical injury, men-

Mugs boy, 11

A mugger attacked a young boy and robbed \$60 from him on May 20 as he walked home by himself on President Street at 4:05 pm.

The victim, 11, told police he was headed towards Fifth Avenue when he was approached by a stranger, an older man who asked, "Can I get a dollar?"

As he pulled out his wallet to oblige, the man snatched, "Give me it all," and grabbed it suddenly from his hand.

After a brief struggle, the man fled on foot east on President Street. A canvasser with police shortly after the incident turned up the youngster's wallet, but \$60 was missing from inside, along with a student identification card.

Takes his cell

A mugger grabbed a cellular phone from a teenage boy on Eighth Street on May 19.

The young man, 13, told police a complete stranger approached him near the northeast corner of Fifth Avenue as he headed home from school at 3:05 pm.

As he crossed Eighth Street along Fifth Avenue, the boy said, a random stranger grabbed his cell phone and took off.

At first the victim didn't report the theft to his father, so the delay made a police canvass useless.

The cellular phone, which was reported stolen by the boy's father, was valued at \$200.

At first the victim didn't report the theft to his father, so the delay made a police canvass useless.

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Notice is hereby given that on Order entered by the Civil Court, Kings County on the 26th day of May, 2005, bearing the Index Number N000342005, a copy of which may be examined in the Office of the Clerk, located at CIVIL COURT, KINGS COUNTY, 141 Livingston Street, Brooklyn, New York 11201, to name (2005) as rights to: 1) Assume the name of: Shalom Bialer. My present name is Alexander Bialer. My present address is: 403 East 3rd Street, Brooklyn, New York 11218. My place of birth is: Berdychiv, Ukraine. My date of birth is: December 16, 1962. 2) Assume the name of: Miriam Glick. My present name is: Mariana Glickman. My present address is: 403 East 3rd Street, Brooklyn, New York 11218. My place of birth is: Poland, Ohio. My date of birth is: May 29, 1963. M002

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Monday, June 13 at 10:30 a.m.

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Following Shabbat services, Rabbi Dennis Ross, Director of Concerned Clergy for Choice of The Education Fund of Family Planning Advocates of NY State, will talk on the bio-medical ethics of and liberal Jewish views on stem cell research.

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Roper quits Hynes race

By Jotham Sederstrom
The Brooklyn Papers

Attorney Sandra Roper announced Tuesday that she is dropping out of the race for Brooklyn district attorney and will instead vie for one of two countywide civil court judgeships. Roper, who reaped 37 percent of the vote during a run against incumbent District Attorney Charles Hynes in 2001, cited dwindling funds as her reason for bowing out less than four months before a crowded Democratic primary. "With my exit, I am confident that this cause that I began at grave personal peril in 2001, will be accomplished by one of my fellow candidates — to bring fundamental justice to the Brooklyn DA's office, free from the taint of self-serving politics," Roper said

at a well-attended May 24 candidates' forum at the Brooklyn House of the Lord Church, on Atlantic Avenue at Nevins Street in Boerum Hill. Until March, Roper had faced charges that she had defrauded an elderly client of nearly \$9,000 after agreeing to represent her free of charge in a dispute with a lending firm. While the charges emanated from a complaint brought to Hynes' office, a special prosecutor was assigned the case in December 2001 due to the adversarial political relationship between the DA and Roper. A trial ended in a hung jury in November 2004.

Then in March, as she was about to be re-elected, Roper agreed to pay back the former client, Mary Lee Ward, in exchange for the criminal charges against her being dropped.

Roper still faces the possibility of being disbarred if found by an Appellate Division disciplinary committee to have lied on three separate occasions while representing Ward.

In announcing she would no longer seek to challenge Hynes, Roper blamed lawyers fees and lengthy court appearances that she said made it difficult to wage a competitive campaign against Hynes, let alone the other five candidates.

A spokesman for Hynes' campaign this week issued a statement affirming that the DA had nothing to do with Roper's prosecution, despite her allegations that the case was politically motivated.

"Ms. Roper was not prosecuted by this office, but by an independent special prosecutor appointed by the court system," said Hynes campaign spokesman Mortimer Matz.

Hynes still faces challenges from Arnold Kris, a former legal counsel for the police department; Braxton Fenner, a trial attorney, state Sen. John Sampson; Mark Peters, a former prosecutor under Attorney General Eliot Spitzer; and Paul Wooten, a former assistant district attorney and counsel to the New York State Black and Puerto Rican legislation caucus.

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HEALTH, MIND & BODY

Teens need to know the danger of tanning beds

New York Methodist Hospital

Earlier this year, the World Health Organization issued a report warning those younger than 18 to avoid tanning beds in an effort to stem their use among minors.

Many teens, especially girls, rely on the devices to get a tan before the summer starts. But physicians and medical organizations agree—the practice is a dangerous one.

"People who use tanning beds, and especially teenagers, need to be aware that the consequence of this action is a significant rise in the number of skin cancer cases," said Stephen Danziger, MD, chief of dermatology at New York Methodist Hospital. "There is

no such thing as a safe tan."

Tanning and sun exposure also contribute to premature aging of the skin. Tanning salon devices generate dangerous ultraviolet radiation that acts like natural sunlight in damaging the skin and inducing cancers.

Skin cancer remains the most common form of cancer in the United States, with more than one million cases of basal or squamous cell skin cancers occurring each year. Melanoma, a more serious form of skin cancer that may affect the deeper layers of skin, is diagnosed in about 60,000 people each year in the United States.

Sun avoidance and adequate protection measures remain the best means of preventing skin

cancer, said Danziger. "The easiest way for people who have to spend time in the sun to adequately protect themselves is with clothing and sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or higher," he said. "Sunglasses should also be used to protect the eyes from ultraviolet damage."

It is also a good idea to check your skin at least once a month in a well-lit room and in front of a mirror. The first time you inspect yourself, take the time to go over the entire surface of your skin to learn the pattern of moles, blemishes, freckles and other marks. Ask for someone to help you examine parts of the skin you are unable to see. "What you should be looking for are new growths, spots, bumps, patches or sores that don't heal after two or three months," said David Frankel, MD, a dermatologist at New York Methodist Hospital.

Basal cell cancers often look like pearly bumps on areas of exposure. Squamous cell carcinomas are also often elevated areas, but these are more likely to have a scaly or rough surface.

In detecting melanomas, remember the "ABCDE" rule. "A" is for asymmetry, when one half of a mole doesn't match the other. "B" is for border, when the edges of a mole or spot are irregular or ragged. "C" is for color, when there is variation in the shades of brown or black, or patches of red or white are included. "D" is for diameter, when the spot is larger than a quarter inch (about the size of a pencil eraser). "E" is for rapid enlargement, generally over weeks to months.

In addition, any mole that suddenly starts to itch, burn, sting or bleed should be evaluated by a dermatologist. "Any of these could be a signal of a melanoma, and you should always show your doctor any area that concerns you," said Frankel. During an exam, a dermatologist will likely ask you questions about your symptoms and risk factors to establish a medical history. The physician may use a powerful microscope called a

dermatoscope, which allows them to see a spot on the skin more clearly.

A skin sample called a biopsy may also be taken and analyzed to determine if the cells are cancerous.

Treatment of skin cancers generally consists of removal of cancerous cells through various means, such as surgery, freezing and laser therapy. In some cases, chemotherapy or radiation treatments may be needed.

"What is important to remember is how easy it is to prevent skin cancer," said Danziger. "By doing things as simple as limiting your time in the sun, using sunscreen, and avoiding tanning beds, you can keep your skin healthy."

To schedule an appointment to see a New York Methodist Hospital affiliated dermatologist call (718) 499-2273.

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Hopefuls rip Markowitz on Ratner

By Jotham Sederstrom
The Brooklyn Papers

A trio of fringe candidates have emerged as challengers to Borough President Marty Markowitz, a Democrat who faces reelection this year — and all are citing the controversial Atlantic Yards project as a top reason for waging their campaigns.

Gary Popkin, chairman of the Kings County Libertarian Party; Gloria Matterna, a co-chair of the New York State Green Party; and lawyer Ted Atlas, a member of the Conservative Party, have all said they plan to run against Markowitz in the general election this November.

Popkin, 67, said that, among other issues, opposition to the taking of private property under the governmental authority of eminent domain for use in developer Bruce Ratner's Atlantic Yards arena and housing project is central to his campaign.



Gary Popkin, chairman of the Kings County Libertarian Party, in front of Borough Hall this week.

"Libertarians would have no objection if developers wanted to buy land from a willing seller," said Popkin, who lives in Park Slope with his wife, Louise, and their two young daughters. "But when friends in government help a private developer take people's property from them — that's wrong."

Matterna, 48, who announced her candidacy in April at Freddy's, a bar in Prospect Heights near the proposed arena site, echoed that sentiment.

It would say the most significant reason I am running is the fact that Markowitz has sold out Brooklyn to Bruce Ratner," said Matterna.

Matterna unsuccessfully ran for City Council on the Green Party line in 2001 and 2003. She lives in Park Slope.

Atlas said he could not be reached for comment by press time. Political consultants doubt that any of the three candidates will stand a chance, both because of their minor party status and because of Markowitz's widespread support.

"The thing that I wonder is why there isn't a cross endorsement by all the major parties because he's done such a fine job," said Gerry O'Brien, a political consultant who works primarily with the Republican Party. "The fact of the matter is, he's probably been the single most effective borough president since Brooklyn became part of New York City."

O'Brien said that even among Markowitz's more controversial positions, such as his staunch support of the Ratner arena plan, it was difficult for critics to argue that he hasn't brought new issues to the forefront.

"For the first time in half a century something is happening in Brooklyn — and the lion's share of the credit has to go to Markowitz," said O'Brien.

Patti Hagan, an opponent of the Atlantic Yards project who lives in Prospect Heights, said that Markowitz has turned the position into something of a joke.

"I think he's reduced the office of borough president to being court jester of Brooklyn," said Hagan. "He's simply cheerleading and befriending every big developer who comes in, at the expense of the neighborhoods."

"I'm supporting Gloria [Matterna]," said Hagan. "I'm glad that someone is making an effort to talk about issues, rather than mindless cheering for every developer that comes along. She really wants to make Borough Hall a place where people with problems can come to work on solutions."

Markowitz said through a spokesman this week that he accepted the challenge. "I welcome the opportunity to discuss my love of Brooklyn and my work on behalf of Brooklyn," said Markowitz. "I'll put my record of addressing the most important issues that Brooklynites face — affordable housing and job creation to name a few — up against anyone."

"We've got more to do and I look forward to continuing to serve as borough president of the greatest place on Earth."

Activist eyes Red Hook-Sun Park seat

By Jotham Sederstrom
The Brooklyn Papers

David Galarza, a former member of Community Board 7 and outspoken Sunset Park activist, this week announced he will challenge incumbent Democratic Councilwoman Sara Gonzalez in September's primary.

The district also includes Red Hook and parts of Windsor Terrace.

Galarza, 35, who has repeatedly butted heads with Gonzalez over a variety of issues, made the announcement at the monthly CB7 meeting on May 18 and followed it with an appearance at a meeting the next night of the Central Brooklyn Independent

Democrats, which endorsed his candidacy.

"Right now, unfortunately, there's nothing being done at City Council or in our community," said Galarza. "Every one is wondering where our City Councilwoman has been for the last years."

Galarza said he first crossed paths with Gonzalez, then chairwoman of CB7, after he organized a vigil following the terrorist attack of Sept. 11, 2001. That demonstration upset Gonzalez, Galarza claims, who had quarrels with the burden it would put on police, who were to provide security that day.

Galarza said his decision to support George Martin — a former district leader from Red Hook and Sunset Park — in a special election against Gonzalez in 2002 may have added to the bad blood.

Either way, last April, Gonzalez chose not to reinstate Galarza to a third term on the community board. Galarza, who has spearheaded rallies against X-rated video shops and a power plant in Sunset Park, believes that the snub was the result of controversial issues he repeatedly brought to the fore while sitting on the board's housing committee.

Since being appointed to the community board in 2000 by then-Councilman Angel Rodriguez — whose subsequent conviction for extortion landed him in jail and created the vacancy that Gonzalez was elected to fill in 2002 — the two-term board member had publicly criticized both Rodriguez and Gonzalez.

"We've gone from a councilman who was convicted to a councilwoman with no convictions," said Galarza. "It's always a shame when an elected official takes punitive action against a member of the community simply for having a difference of opinion," said Galarza in a prepared statement following his dismissal from the board last year.

"It's politics a la Bloomberg. If you can't be a rubber stamp, you can't be on the board."

On Wednesday, however, Galarza said: "She's not a bad person, she's just not a good politician."

Gonzalez said that it was Galarza's choice to run, but that it would not come without a fight. "We live in a community where there is a democracy," said Gonzalez, 56, who said she has raised \$27,000 thus far for her campaign.

"He's allowed to run, but I'm the best person for the job. I've been working very hard in this community."

In particular, Gonzalez cited her fight to rid Sunset Park of the more than 20 pornographic video shops and bookstores on Third Avenue and elsewhere. More recently, she said she led an effort to significantly downsize Sunset Park, which is being increasingly eyed by developers now that restrictions have been tightened to the north in Park Slope and to the south in Bay Ridge.

Additionally, she said she has been fighting to ease the burden of students in southwest Brooklyn who are faced with overcrowded schools.

She acknowledged that her support of an Ikea furniture store in Red Hook has been controversial, in part because some residents believe the neighborhood's streets cannot support the traffic anticipated if the plan is completed.

Many in Red Hook had also criticized her failure to take a timely stance on the proposal, Gonzalez said, however, that she made a decision to support Ikea only after discussing the issue with constituents, engineers and the city Department of Environmental Protection.

"I believe with any project there is always going to be problems," said Gonzalez. "When I first put out my decision, we included the DEP and the Department of Health [in discussions]. I didn't just wake up and decide that Ikea was a great thing."

"I waited almost two years to make that decision. And I believe that Ikea has credibility."

Galarza said that he is concerned about Ikea's treatment of workers and he says he wants to know if the furniture store will be union friendly.

"Our waterfront space is limited and it's precious," said Galarza. "And so before permanent structures are built anywhere along the waterfront, the community's ideas and desires should be exhausted without the pressure of consultants and their petty parties and promotions."

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MTA BIDDERS...

Continued from page 1

Forest City Ratner has since discussed plans with MTA officials to move the rail yards and upgrade them. The yards now actively store MTA buses and LIRR trains, which come in at night.

The announcement of the RFP this week raised questions as to just where Forest City Ratner stands in terms of negotiations with the MTA and the significance of a letter signed by MTA and Forest City Ratner officials that stipulates an "if...when" agreement for the property.

In response to the call for proposals last week, which appeared as a public announcement in the New York Times on May 18, Forest City Ratner said the request indicated positive movement.

"We welcome the RFP and look forward to a successful completion of this stage of the project," said Bruce Bender, Forest City Ratner's executive vice president for government and community affairs.

"We always expected that the MTA would issue an RFP, since they said as much in the letter of agreement they signed with Forest City Ratner," Bender added.

Nesya Pranger, an organizer for the Straphanger's Campaign, said in an April interview with The Brooklyn Papers that an open RFP bidding process is the only way the MTA could "realize the full value of the rail yards." But, she cautioned, the competition can be iced out when "power brokers are running the processes."

Pranger's Straphanger's Campaign was one of four public interest groups that in April filed a lawsuit against the MTA, charging the agency violated its statutory duty by not getting as much money as possible for the Hudson Yards in Manhattan and did not conduct a fair and open bidding process. The MTA board voted 14-0 to accept the New York Jets' \$250 million bid for the rights to build a football stadium that is also the centerpiece of Mayor Michael Bloomberg's 2012 Olympic bid, over the rail yards. The agency rejected a \$760 million-plus bid from Cablevision, which owns Madison Square Garden.

Lawyers for MSG said in their own lawsuit that the MTA, with its politically appointed board, approved the Jets' bid because the stadium is a project that the mayor and Gov. George Pataki wanted.

Even if Ratner's plans are

trumped by a bidder willing to pay more — as Cablevision did in its losing bid for the Hudson Yards site in Manhattan — the sale must be approved by the 17 members of the MTA board, all of whom are nominated by Pataki, and four of who are recommended by the mayor.

Both the mayor and governor have expressed their support for Ratner's plan.

Asked if the bidding process would help determine the value of the rail yards development rights, Kelly said, "It would depend on the number of bids and how many people are interested in the property."

Forest City Ratner officials have said the company will pay whatever the land is determined to be worth.

"We have said repeatedly that we would pay fair market value for this land," said Bender. "The RFP process is one way to determine that value."

Frustrated residents who oppose the arena, say the RFP should be withheld until an independent appraisal of the site is undertaken, which the MTA promised would be done.

"I just think it's the cart before the horse," said Patti Hagan, a staunch opponent of the plan who co-founded the Prospect Heights Action Coalition, an anti-arena group.

"It's backwards, the independent appraisal would set a bottom price from where the bidding would start," she said.

"If the value were established it would be easier for bidders to figure out where they had to go in order to get a piece of the property," she noted that on the West Side of Manhattan, an appraisal determined the rail yards' value to be \$923 million.

Kelly said off-handedly that he wasn't sure of the status of the appraisal, and did not return several inquiries on the matter by press time.

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tips for traveling

For flying families, parents as well as kids need to know what to expect at airport security checkpoints.

With more detailed inspections, from baby gear to belt buckles, the potential for meltdowns are plenty. A child is sure to be agitated when a beloved teddy bear disappears into the scanner or when those new light-up shoes need to be taken off for inspection.

Some air travel tips are tried and true: Pack more patience than luggage; on ascent and descent, give your child something to drink or suck on so he can pop his ears; carry on non-messy snacks and water, moist towelettes and an extra set of clothes for you and the kids just in case there's a spill or motion sickness; and take in surprise treats, favorite books and mini-travel games to keep your kids occupied.

The Transportation Security Administration's Web site at www.tsa.gov provides a detailed list of items that are prohibited and permitted on an aircraft. Just knowing what to expect helps take the edge off, says frequent traveler Susan Foster, author of "Smart Packing for Today's Traveler" (Smart Travel Press, 2004).

Her advice includes:

• A small umbrella stroller will help corral a tired child and is typically allowed for carry-on. Or arrange to gate-check a stroller at the aircraft door and retrieve it after a flight.

• At many airports, adult travelers will be required to display airline boarding pass and government-issued photo ID more than once.

• What's helpful: A wallet-size purse with a shoulder strap, or a fanny pack with a front compartment that has a zipper to get a crib or cot away from blinds and outlets. Remember, your little travelers have all new territory to explore on electronic games or CD players, be prepared to prove to security that the devices work.

From movies on laptops to portable changing tables, never before have parents had so many travel products to choose from. For example, Munchkin, at www.munchkininc.com, sells a new line of travelware for children, including disposable tray covers and a compact insulated bottle and food carrier.

If your child likes to listen to recorded books on trips, one option is to log onto www.audible.com, and download children's books onto a portable MP3 player for a fee. Other travel tips:

• Just like with airport security, it pays to avoid surprises at your destination. Get specific when making plans. Does

Parent-to-Parent



By Betsy Flagler

your toddler have to be potty-trained to join any child-care activities? Is there a shower in your room but no bathtub? Are inflatable toys allowed at the pool?

Find out those ahead of time to avoid a possible tantrum over a plastic turtle.

• Once you arrive, think child-proofing details. You may even have to move furniture to get a crib or cot away from blinds and outlets. Remember, your little travelers have all new territory to explore on electronic games or CD players, be prepared to prove to security that the devices work.

• Carry along pertinent contact information for closest relatives, doctor's phone numbers and insurance cards.

• Ask your family's health-care provider how to prepare your allergy-prone child for a trip. Some kids who are susceptible to seasonal allergies that trigger asthma will take an antihistamine for a week

before staying in a new environment where unfamiliar molds might be, for example.

• If you're vacationing at the beach or pool, take turns being the designated "water watcher," suggests the National Safe Kids Campaign (www.safekids.org). Be the person who can always see and hear the child and stays close enough to intervene in an emergency.

No matter how well your little guppy seems to adjust to the water, don't get lulled into a false sense of security about her ability to swim. It takes only seconds and shallow water to claim a child's life, so there's not time to be "back in a minute."

Can you help?

"My son's grandparents thrive on giving him extrava-

gant and inappropriate gifts. For his third birthday, it was an above-ground swimming pool."

For his fourth birthday, it was a television and DVD player, and they told him it was for his room.

What can we do to stop the gift-giving, or deal with the heartbreak when we have to take the new gift away?

—a mother
If you have tips or a question, call our toll-free hotline any time at (800) 827-1092 or e-mail us at p2p@psa.net.

Parents concerned about their children's calorie intake can obtain a copy of the new Parent To Parent newsletter "Getting Over Overeating" by sending a long, self-addressed, stamped envelope and \$2 to Newsletter, P.O. Box 167, Wickliffe, OH 44092.

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Lack of dough downs Uprising

Jess Wisloski
The Brooklyn Papers

A mini-chain of beloved bread shops in Park Slope and Cobble Hill closed last month due to a lack of dough.

The green kind.

Uprising Bread Bakery closed its two Park Slope shops — at 138 Seventh Ave. near Carroll Street and 328 Seventh Ave. near Ninth Street — and one in Cobble Hill on Court near Warren streets. The Brooklyn Papers learned that the company filed for bankruptcy and, at one site, was facing fines for health code violations.

The company, which according to bankruptcy filings is owned by Brendan Gaustella, never renewed a permit for the operation at 328 Seventh Ave., at Ninth Street, and still owes \$9,000 in fines, according to the city Department of Health.

The shops were known for carrying a variety of breads, like sourdough and Calamata olive loaves. But several neighbors said the quality changed after the founding partners, husband-and-wife team Joseph Rodriguez and Nicole Lane, sold the business last year.

According to Gaustella's bankruptcy filings, he filed a Chapter 7, or involuntary bankruptcy of the shops in early November 2004. By the end of December, he had filed a Chapter 11, or voluntary bankruptcy on the manufacturing plant where the bread was produced in Sunset Park.

Some neighbors say the business never recovered from the ownership change.

"They changed their product when the ownership changed," said Roslyn B. Huebner, of Agayay and Huebner Real Estate, which shared a building at 138 Seventh Ave. with the bakery. "It had less variety," she said, but added, "they did a great soup."

"It had a very nice sense of community, not too chichi," Huebner said.

She guessed Uprising Bakery just couldn't keep up with the ever-rising rents.

"Rents are very, very high," the real estate agent said. "It's very much missed. It's something that's very needed, and it was so convenient for us. We've probably all lost a little weight since it closed."

Bruce Mesh, who lived near the bakery at 328 Seventh Ave., said he was taken aback by the disappearance of Uprising.

"It was a fabulous bakery," said Mesh, "really interesting place — good bread, good customer support — and they're gone."

They're a real Brownstone Brooklyn institution, he said. "It's a real hit to Seventh Avenue, and the area around it as well."

The owner of the building at 210 Court St. that housed Uprising in Cobble Hill, said in a telephone interview that the reason for the disappearance of his tenant was bankruptcy, plain and simple.

The building owner, who did not want his named used in this article, added that he had been in litigation with Gaustella for over a year.

"It's done now, it's all over, it's all done," the man asked. "How much in back rent was owed, he said, 'I don't really want to get into that.'"

"It's my business and it's their business," he said. "Maybe somebody else will discuss it with you."

Gaustella did not return calls seeking comment for this article. Nor did his bankruptcy attorney, Douglas Pick, although an assistant at Pick's office verified the lawyer had handled the case.

And even Lane, whose husband made the signature tasty breads for which Uprising developed its reputation, was loath to speak about why the loaves stopped baking.

"He bought the businesses with the intent of keeping it going," Lane said of Gaustella. "It was a really kind-of bad situation, and I don't want to add fuel to the fire."

"We sold the business with the idea that the gentleman would keep it going, and take the business to the next level," she said. "Obviously, that didn't really happen."

Lane and Rodriguez's lawyer, Benjamin Zelenyev, said Gaustella was still in litigation with the couple for a settlement of the sale, which was partially conveyed in February 2004 through the issuance of promissory notes, which were defaulted upon, he said.

"The business was sold for part cash, and part promissory notes, and a security agreement the buyer defaulted on," Zelenyev said. The collateral for the notes was the bakery equipment, the ownership of which Lane and Rodriguez are still willing to be granted.

According to the Health Department, the 328 Seventh Ave. site failed its final compliance inspection, and was ordered shut on April 1.

Earlier inspections, however, at 138 Seventh Ave. last August, and at 210 Court St. last June, also suffered violations for everything from expired milk to having an inadequate hand-washing facility for workers, according to Health Department records.

Among them, the three sites shared 16 health violations.

Fortunately for Lane and Rodriguez, they still have their reputation as great bread people, they have what dough the did get out of the sale and they're still got their health.

My husband's still baking bread, and we're moving to the Catskills," said Lane, adding, "We're still together."



(718) 834-9350

The Brooklyn Papers' essential guide to the Borough of Kings

May 28, 2005

'Christ' in DUMBO

- D'Ambrosi on location
- Macy's after hours
- Brooklyn Hospital turns 160

By Lisa J. Curtis
GO Brooklyn Editor

If you've been in DUMBO and Coney Island lately, you may have seen writer-director **Dario D'Ambrosi** and his Italian film crew shooting his movie "Pathological Passion of the Christ." D'Ambrosi says he is widely recognized since he played the role of the sadistic Roman soldier who beats the stuffing out of Jesus in **Mel Gibson's** controversial "The Passion of the Christ."

"Everybody hates me now, around the world," Dario told GO Brooklyn via telephone through his thick Italian accent. "I had a really big problem when the movie came

out in Italy. People yell at me on the street. It was incredibly strange." But the actor channeled that bewilderment into a creative outlet, writing the play "The Pathological Passion of the Christ," which was staged in December at La Mama in Manhattan, and then adapted for this film. (His movie features most of the actors from the play's cast.)

D'Ambrosi, who's performed at La Mama for the past 25 years, said that last Friday he shot one "very important scene when Jesus meets Peter and Judah" for "Pathological Passion" on the beach in Coney Island — the next day, at nearly the exact same spot, a small site-seeing plane crashed on the beach.

"It's amazing that we shoot the scene there, and the day after, the plane came down," said D'Ambrosi. "It was really scary." The director does not appear to be a superstitious man, however, and hopes to get his film in the Venice Film Festival.

And he's a good sport. Despite the negative response to his role in "Passion," it hasn't diminished D'Ambrosi's affection for Gibson, he said.

"I'm excited to call Mel and show him my movie," said D'Ambrosi. "Now we are very good friends." On Tuesday, D'Ambrosi returned to Rome to begin post-production.

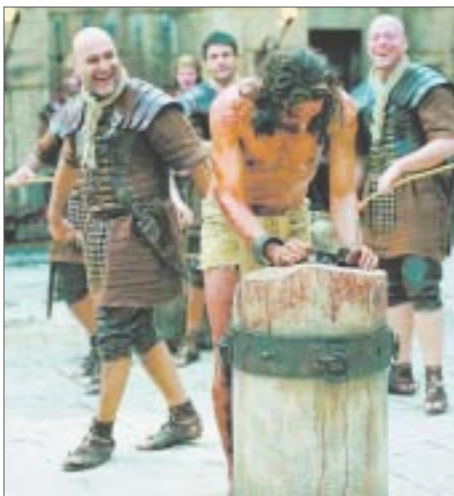
Shopper's club

On Monday, May 23, Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts' Ovation tickets holders were invited to shop at Macy's in Downtown Brooklyn at 6 pm, while the store was closed to the public. As if shopping without lines wasn't pleasure enough, each guest was presented with a Macy's gift card as they entered the store.

The unique party took place throughout the department store, with performances on several floors and catering provided by Naturally Delicious. The 50th anniversary benefit paid tribute to Macy's Chairman and CEO **Ron Klein**, whose company has supported Brooklyn Center for several years, said **Cheri Walsh**, Brooklyn Center's managing director. The event also honored **Peggy Alston**, director of Restoration Youth Arts Academy at the Center for Arts & Culture in Bedford-Stuyvesant.

Borough President **Marty Markowitz** stopped by to distribute his proclamations and sing (a la Marilyn Monroe) "Happy Birthday dear President."

Standing Ovations: (1) Peggy Alston was honored by Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at its 2005 Ovation Awards inside Macy's Downtown Brooklyn on May 23; (2) Borough President Marty Markowitz (left) with another Ovation Awards honoree, Ron Klein, Chairman and CEO of Macy's East; (3) Brooklyn Children's Museum's 2005 gala honorary chair Mos Def left his chair at the Brooklyn Marriott empty on May 23; (4) Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce President Ken Adams with the Children's Museum's honoree Paul Gangsei.



Inspired by Mel: Italian actor Dario D'Ambrosi (left) who played the role of the frightening Roman soldier who mercilessly beats Jesus in Mel Gibson's film "The Passion of the Christ," filmed scenes for his own film "The Pathological Passion of the Christ" in DUMBO and Coney Island.



to **Christoph Kimmich**, president of Brooklyn College, which is also celebrating a special anniversary — its 75th. Walsh said the fete met Brooklyn Center's goal of raising \$90,000, which will support the Center's education programs as well as its 2005-2006 season, presented at Brooklyn College's Whitman Theater at the corner of Campus Road and Hill Place in Flatbush. The upcoming season promises performances by **Savon Glover**, DancelBrazil, **Bob Newhart**, the Atlanta Ballet and much more. For more information, call (718) 951-4500.

Def-inately missing

Mos Def was nowhere to be found at the Brooklyn Children's Museum Gala 2005, of which he was honorary chair. Unable to attend due to a scheduling conflict, the star of "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy" was missed, but Monday's party at the Brooklyn Marriott, which honored **Paul Gangsei**, partner at Mann, Phelps & Phillips, LLP, and **Wally Parker**, president of KeySpan Energy Delivery, went on without him and raised over \$300,000, according to Brooklyn Children's Museum spokeswoman Samantha Terry.

"This year's gala was a tremendous success with over 400 guests in attendance," said Brooklyn Children's Museum President **Carol Enselé**. "Our leadership and generous

supporters, such as our honorees **Paul Gangsei** and **KeySpan**, play a pivotal role in ensuring that the museum continues to thrive, especially now, with construction of our expanded facility underway."

In addition to the exhibits, workshops, cultural and natural history collections and after-school programs already taking place at the museum, located at 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue in Crown Heights, look forward to the return of their free concert series held on their rooftop each summer.

For more information on supporting the museum, call (718) 735-4400.

Rx for fun

Celebrate 160 years of Brooklyn Hospital Center healing at the Brooklyn Hospital Foundation's 2005 Founders Ball at the Brooklyn Marriott in Downtown Brooklyn on June 3. The festivities will kick off with cocktails at 6:30 pm, followed by dinner and dancing. The proceeds from the black-tie shindig, co-chaired by **Lizanne Fontaine**, **Dino Veronese** and **Buddhadev Manvar**, will benefit the hospital's geriatric unit. Individual tickets are \$500. To purchase them, or for more information, visit the Web site at www.bh.org/foundersball or call (718) 250-8888.



CINEMA

It's a 'Steal'



This year's edition of the Brooklyn International Film Festival, "Opinion 8," which kicks off at the Brooklyn Museum on June 3, has a lineup featuring 150 films in five categories (feature, documentary, animation, experimental and short films) that respond to a range of current events and topics.

"Steal Me," the opening night film, directed by American filmmaker **Melissa Painter**, tells the story of 15-year-old **Jake** (Danny Alexander), who comes looking for his mother in a small Montana town. He befriends **Tucker** (Hunter Parrish), whose family takes him in, but starts taking the family's possessions before starting an affair with neighbor **Grace** (Toby Poser), a newly single mom who's twice his age.

The 7 pm screening of "Steal Me" will be followed by an opening night party with DJ **Jolene** and a performance by flamenco guitarist **Romero**.

BIFF continues through June 12 with even more provocative fare, along with BIFF's first-ever "Kids-filmfest" on June 5, from 1 pm to 5 pm.

The BIFF screenings will take place at the Brooklyn Museum's Cantor Auditorium, 200 Eastern Parkway at Washington Avenue in Prospect Heights. Tickets to the opening night film and party are \$25. For a complete list of films, screening dates and times, go to www.brooklynfilmfestival.org.

— Lisa J. Curtis

THEATER

Left laughing

Presented by the folks who brought last year's "Hell" theater festival to Williamsburg, "The Moral Values Festival" kicks off at The Brick Theater on June 3.

The festival will stage 28 plays through July 3 with themes that touch on the hot-button topics of sexuality, politics and religion. Among the works to be staged are (pictured) "Freak Out under the Apple Tree: (Some of) The Best of Tom X. Chao" (June 3-5), a selection of the comedian's short comedies.

Brick Theater co-founder **Michael Gardner** explained the inspiration for this massive exploration of morality. "We were inspired by the focus of the 2004 elections on morality," said Gardner. "If moral values can elect the leadership of the country, then maybe they're equal to the task of programming our summer festival. Of course, we can't speak to the effect this will have on our theater's foreign policy initiatives."

The Brick Theater is located at 575 Metropolitan Ave. between Union Avenue and Lorimer Street. For a complete schedule of shows, log onto www.bricktheater.com. Tickets are \$10 for each show. Log onto www.smarttix.com or call (212) 868-4444.

— Lisa J. Curtis

DANCE

Dance Africa

Now through May 31, the Brooklyn Academy of Music is staging a multimedia presentation of African art and culture.

At the BAMcinemathek, "The Best of the African Film Festival" features screenings of **Moussa Sene Absane's** film "Madame Brouette" (pictured) on May 28 at 6:50 pm and 9:15 pm. Set in a Senegalese shantytown, this 2002 film is about a spunky divorcee who sells produce on the street. ("Brouette" is French for wheelbarrow.) At the BAM Howard Gilman Opera House, the 28th annual DanceAfrica festival, curated by **Chuck Davis**, will feature performances by several dance companies.

The DanceAfrica Bazaar will be set up in the GGMC parking lot at Lafayette Avenue and Ashland Place.

The Brooklyn Academy of Music is located at 30 Lafayette Ave. at Ashland Place in Fort Greene. Call (718) 636-4100.

— Lisa J. Curtis

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BROOKLYN

Neighborhood
Dining Guide

This week:
MYRTLE AVENUE

abistro

154 Carlton Ave. at Myrtle Avenue, (718) 855-9435 (MC, V) Entrees: \$9-\$24.

Chef Abdou Gueye, who co-owns this restaurant with his wife Cassandra, serves up African fusion specialties in an intimate, modern setting as five-year-old daughter Sonia dubs with the regulars. Appetizers at abistro, which opened on April 8, include curry zucchini soup and the crispy Leopold crab cake, served on a bed of fennel, pineapple and arugula salad with sundried tomatoes and goat cheese mousse. For an entree, try the "moules frites" (herbed fries and mussels served with plum tomatoes, mushrooms and scallops in a ginger lemongrass broth), or go for the chef's favorite dish: fried chicken served with pineapple-scented jasmine rice cake and wilted baby greens with Senegalese salsa in a Dijonnaise sauce. (Vegetarians take note: Gueye will substitute tofu for most meat entrees and salads for an additional \$2.)

Desserts range from spicy bread pudding with caramel sauce and vanilla ice cream to sorrel and ginger creme brulee. Abistro's liquor license is still pending, but there's no corkage fee. Open for lunch and dinner, Tuesday through Sunday, and weekend brunch, from 11 am to 4 pm. Closed Mondays.

Five Spot

459-461 Myrtle Ave. at Washington Avenue, (718) 852-0002, www.fivespotbistro.com (Disc, MC, V) Entrees: \$7.95-\$13.95.

A 60-foot bar, hardwood floors and an intricately patterned in ceiling decorate Five Spot's dining room, while exposed brick, crushed red velvet and a wood-burning fireplace adorn the walls where co-owners Malik and Kim Armstead have been serving down-home cooking since 1996. Southern fried chicken and hickory-smoked spare ribs are just two of the popular dishes, and they're now serving 100 percent pure beef burgers, as well as veggie burgers. Five Spot offers a takeout-only daily lunch special for \$3.95 that includes meat (or fish for \$4.95) and two side orders; in-house diners get half off their lunch plates. Side dishes range from black-eyed peas and collard greens to macaroni and cheese and candied yams. Homemade bread is served with all dinner entrees.

For dessert, try Five Spot's individual peach pie or peach cobbler, or opt for the three-layer coconut cake in the evenings, live music or DJ's perform on stage. Check the "Brooklyn Nightlife" listings for upcoming performers. Limited outdoor seating available. Open daily for lunch and dinner. Open for takeout from noon to midnight.

Jive Turkey

441 Myrtle Ave. at Waverly Avenue, (718) 797-1688 (AmEx, MC, Visa) Whole turkeys: \$44.95-\$74.95.

Not surprisingly, the signature dish at Jive Turkey is the whole fried turkey.

"We deep fry the turkeys in very hot oil for 18 to 24 minutes. The result is much juicier on the inside with a light crisp on the outside," says owner Arida Westbrook. The turkeys come in 15 flavors ranging from honey pecan and lemon pepper to peach bourbon and Mexican mole. Westbrook also serves a menu of homemade desserts including extra large Rice Krispy treats, cookies, cupcakes and breads.

At Jive Turkey, the wooden countertop and cabinets hold recipe books and turkey figurines, while the curtained window just above the "kitchen sink" displays a flower box waiting for warm weather. While the restaurant offers limited seating, there is a "grab, grabble and go" menu of salads, sandwiches, meats and sides. Jive Turkey serves five flavors of homemade lemonade, particularly popular on summer days: regular, mango, strawberry, pink lemonade and ginger mint. Whole turkeys can be shipped nationwide. Open daily for lunch and dinner.

Karrot

431 Myrtle Ave. at Clinton Avenue, (718) 522-9753 (AmEx, Disc, MC, Visa) Smoothies: \$3.75-\$4.75.

The best smoothie in Brooklyn can be found at Karrot, owner Carlos Aguilas says of his hip health food store. He offers two types of organic smoothies: the Jubilee with blackberries, strawberries, blueberries, bananas, soy milk and mango juice (\$3.75) and the Omega with almonds, bananas, soy protein and almond milk (\$4.75) — "and lots of love," adds Aguilas.

On Karrot's shelves are international teas, fresh organic dairy products and eggs, wheat-free and dairy-free products, and natural beauty supplies. The store, which opened in November 2002, even stocks natural pet foods.

"We've got lots of quick cuisine stuff, lots of low-carb breads and baked goods for the low-carb crowd, cereals, you name it," Aguilas said. The natural food mini chain — three additional locations are at 283 Grand Ave., 854 W. 181st St. in the Bronx, and 304 W. 117th St. in Harlem — stocks products from small producers, some of which are exclusive to the store. Aguilas says his inventory is priced 10 to 15 percent lower than most Manhattan and Brooklyn health food stores. Open daily.

★ = Full review available at

Brooklyn
papers.com

Abbreviation Key: AmEx= American Express, Disc= Diner's Club, Disc= Discover Card, MC= MasterCard, Visa= Visa Card



Lemon tart with Raspberries and a cup of coffee at Maggie Brown.

Maggie Brown

455 Myrtle Ave. at Washington Avenue, (718) 643-7007 (Cash only) Entrees: \$9-\$16.

Named after the 99-year-old grandmother of one of the restaurant's owners, Chelsea Altman, Maggie Brown brings international cuisine to the table — grandma style. With a bit of Mexican here, and a bit of Italian there, and a whole lot of French, Asian and Southern in between, Maggie Brown's menu has something for everyone.

Chef Josie Smith Malave's specialties include pan-roasted red snapper with sautéed vegetable croquette and grilled asparagus, and grilled garlic chicken with homemade biscuits and gravy. For an appetizer, try the warm spinach salad with candied walnuts and sliced pears. Grandma's hearty cooker is a tough act to follow, but a hefty slice of the rich peanut butter pie stands its ground — and then some. Or try the fresh berry shortcake or the flourless chocolate cake. No room for dessert? Roll over to the bar for a glass of budget-friendly wine or an after-dinner cocktail.

Outdoor garden seating available on the upper deck; in mid-June, a BBQ station and mojito bar will open on the lower deck. Weekend brunch is served from 10 am to 4:30 pm. Open Sunday through Thursday, from 8 am to 11 pm; Fridays and Saturdays, from 10 am to midnight.

Pillow Cafe & Lounge

372 Myrtle Ave. at Adelphi Street, (718) 246-2711, www.pillowcafe.com (Cash only) Entrees: \$3.95-\$7.95.

If you can't seem to locate Pillow Cafe and Lounge — it does not have a sign above its entrance — just look for an inviting cluster of pillows in the window seat. The beige, brown and red interior of the cafe also offers a bar with four barstools and four tables with comfortable chairs. The food here is all made from familiar but mostly organic ingredients. "We make things that we all ate when we were little," co-owner Boka Odunwusi said. The menu ranges from peanut butter and jelly sandwiches to smoked salmon salad. The most popular items are the goat cheese and sundried tomato sandwich served with homemade pesto on sourdough bread, rivaled by their avocado salad with fresh spinach leaves and goat cheese. If you're in the mood for some sweets, Pillow Cafe and Lounge has black-and-white brownies, cheesecake and a selection of brownies and cookies that varies from day to day. Open daily.

Sapolo

501 Myrtle Ave. at Ryerson Street, (718) 789-7788 (AmEx, Disc, MC, V) Entrees: \$5.50-\$19.95.

At William San's Sapolo restaurant, sample Chinese and Spanish food ranging from lobster chow mein to "carne de res con pimientos" (green pepper steak). Here you'll find the traditional fare of both cultures. Chinese classics include General Tso's chicken, spicy scallops in garlic sauce, and ham egg foo young. Or go for Spanish dishes such as the "chicharrones de pollo sin hueso" (fried chicken cracklings), "chuletita frita" (fried pork chops) or paella. The daily lunch special for \$4.95-\$6.15 (depending on choice of meat) is served with your choice of egg drop, wonton or sweet-and-sour soup, as well as white or chicken-fried rice. Open daily for lunch and dinner. Delivery is cash only.

Sushi Okdo

497 Myrtle Ave. at Hall Street, (718) 789-1373, (Disc, MC, Visa) Entrees: \$10-\$15.95.

It's always sushi time at this Japanese and Korean restaurant. Just look at the check in the dining room — it tells time in sushi! And although the small restaurant, decorated in various shades of blue, is located on the second floor of a two-story building, outside, the enormous sign bearing its name is hard to miss. Owner Eunmi Kang customized the menu so it appeals to both native Korean and Japanese as well as American customers. The most popular dish among Pratt students of Korean descent, according to Kang, is the "Bibimbop," a mildly spiced combination of rice, vegetables, eggs and your choice of meat or bean curd. Here's the fun part: the sides are served in separate compartments and you get to mix them yourself.

On the Japanese side of the menu, the dragon roll, made with eel and crab and adorned with artfully sliced pieces of avocado, wins in popularity. Lunch specials are served Monday through Friday, from 11:30 am to 3 pm. Open daily.

Editor's note: These are a sampling of restaurants in the neighborhood. The list rotates, and it is not comprehensive. For more restaurants, go to www.brooklynpapers.com on the Web. If your restaurant is not listed and you would like it to be, please contact GO Brooklyn Editor Lisa Curtis via e-mail at Curtis@brooklynpapers.com.

Bouille redux

Chef Neil Ganic's second incarnation of popular Bouillabaisse offers more choices, more seats

By Tina Barry
for The Brooklyn Papers

The problem with sequels is that they follow a successful first act. People arrive at the new venture hoping that whatever they loved about the original will be cloned and whatever they didn't will be miraculously improved upon. Inevitably, some expectations are met along with a few disappointments.

Fans of Neil Ganic's now-defunct La Bouillabaisse who follow him to his new Bouillabaisse 126 may need a few minutes and a glass of wine to adjust to his latest cafe's streamlined digs.

The original cafe was an anomaly when it opened on Atlantic Avenue in 1993. At that time, the street was known for its antique shops, not dining. Patrons who entered Ganic's French bistro, with its one dark, narrow dining room decorated with French flea market clutter, felt like they had discovered a secret bistro-salon where conversation was lively and the food, well, that was an experience.

Bouillabaisse 126, which opened in December in the Columbia Street Waterfront District, has two large rooms. The front dining area (with one brick wall and another painted in golden swirls) has brightly striped banquettes and a noisy open kitchen. On a lower level is an ainer room with the bar and tables covered in blue-and-white checked tablecloths. Beyond that is a lovely garden that makes an ideal setting for Ganic's dishes which his loyal followers will find basically unchanged.

Also unchanged, to some diners' delight and others' frustration, is the super-sized blackboard carried from table to table, on which each day's menu is written.

On that blackboard, you'll find with the sweet, wine-poached pear with its dredge of Gorgonzola cheese and his



Owner Neil Ganic with his children, Nick, 10 and Leila, 7, at the new, bigger Bouillabaisse 126 restaurant.

super-sized, crusty crab cake among the original appetizers, and of course, his signature saffron-tinged bouillabaisse on the menu, still as lusty as I remembered. What will please carnivores is the addition of more meat entrees that are just as homey and expertly prepared as his seafood.

Ganic has always had a way with light, beautifully balanced salads. On a recent warm evening he served lightly steamed asparagus, grilled red peppers and slices of slightly bitter endive

sprinkled with chunks of Roquefort and served with a ring of basil-laced dressing. This salad was salty, sweet and nutty. What could be more appropriate on a spring evening?

His crab cake is thick and dense with sweet crabmeat, and I enjoyed the three petite dots of creamy aioli (mayonnaise flavored with garlic and red pepper), hot mustard and ripe tomato salsa that partner the cake.

And that bouillabaisse. Whether it's the real McCoy is open to debate, as even though it is one of those dishes that varies from region to region. Here, great bowls of the fish stew are placed

why order meat? Because at Bouillabaisse 126, it's just as good. The filet mignon, usually a bland piece of beef, was rich in flavor, crusty on the outside and really rare (as ordered). It arrived with simple mashed potatoes and leeks juliened and sautéed in butter. Lovely.

Desserts are standard bistro fare: creme brulee, fruit tarts, a chocolate soufflé and bread pudding. The bread pudding is studded with moist yellow raisins and the texture is light, but it's too dull to eat more than a few bites — even with the stingy spoonful of blueberry sauce and the big puff of unsweetened whipped cream.

DINING

Bouillabaisse 126 (126 Union St. at Columbia Street in the Columbia Street Waterfront District) accepts Visa and MasterCard. Entrees: \$10-\$19. The restaurant is open daily for dinner and serves brunch on Saturdays and Sundays from 11 am to 3 pm. For reservations, call (718) 855-4425.

The chef's thin sliver of lemon tart, served without adornment, is as rich as a hunk of lemon square. It's very good, but its solo presentation looked forlorn. A couple of ripe berries or a dollop of fresh whipped cream would enhance its taste and give its appearance some needed oomph.

Ganic and his cafe are truly New York stories. Where else would you find a Yugoslavian-born chef cooking French food in what was once a mostly Italian enclave? What else can you say but "merci!"

Along with a bigger location on Union Street, Ganic has expanded his classic French bistro menu to include more meat entrees.

Now that's a sausage for ya'

Do you pride yourself on loving that declassé New York snack — the hot dog? On Memorial Day, this Monday, May 30, you can watch gluttons fire them down — and consume a few dogs yourself — at the "First Annual Hot Dog Eating Contest," at Schnack (122 Union St. at Columbia Street).

"Contestants competed in the restaurant's pre-event hot dog eating heats," said Harry Hawk, the event's referee — along with his Schnack partners Jim Manary and Alan Harding (host of Discovery Home & Leisure Channel's "Cookin' in Brooklyn" show). On the day of the event, the six to eight contestants, who proved they can down the dogs in record time in qualifying heats, will do their best to speed-eat a 30-inch, that's right, 30-inch, Stahl-Meyer frank in a 28-inch long Caputo's Bakery bun. (The franks and buns were custom-made for this contest.)

The winner will take home more than \$400 in prizes and cash from Schnack and the event's other sponsors — New York Water Taxi, Stahl-Meyer Company, Caputo's Bakery, Jever Pilsner Beer and American Stevedoring Inc.

The contestants must adhere to strict rules of conduct during the competition: No deconstructing of the frank and/or bun will be tolerated, although breaking off portions of the dog with its bun is allowed. Swallowing without sufficient chewing is grounds for disqualification.

Get there between 11 am and 1 pm, and you'll get a free Stahl-Meyer, all-beef hot dog. The contest begins at 1 pm. At 2 pm, the dogs will be sold for 50 cents. You'll even get a free 8-ounce Jever Pilsner beer (1 per order) to wash it down.

For more information, call Schnack at (718) 855-2879.

— Tina Barry



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Park Slope writer-director Alice Wu shot her new film, "Saving Face," on location in New York City.

Family ties

Comic mother-daughter tale is universal

By Lisa J. Curtis
GO Brooklyn Editor

Brooklynite Alice Wu is optimistic about box office sales for her first feature film, "Saving Face," which is being released this weekend by Sony Pictures Classics.

"There's something for everyone," the Park Slope resident told GO Brooklyn. "Asian lesbians! For gay men, Joan Chen. And I do feel that almost everyone resonates with this [story]. No matter who you are, usually you have some sort of secret wish or something that you held back on because you worry about what your family or your community will think. There's something exhilarating about seeing people reach for that."

In addition to Chen, the Elizabeth Taylor of China, another boldface name attached to Wu's film is Will Smith, in the role of producer.

Wu's film is a comic story about Wil (Michelle Krusiec), an independent Chinese-American woman, who comes home to find her pregnant, 48-year-old mother (Chen) sitting on her Park Slope stoop one evening. She's decided to move in with Wil, because her strict father threw her out of his house when she refused to name the baby's father.

Now that Ma is in such close proximity, Wil's secret life as a lesbian threatens to be revealed to her traditional Chinese family, employer and friends. (Not that much can be hidden for long from the gossip, close-knit community of women portrayed in the film.)

But the close quarters also offer the mother and daughter an opportunity to grow closer.

"I wrote 'Saving Face' as a love-letter to my mother," said Wu, 35. But it doesn't mean she didn't put her mother to work translating the Chinese dialogue for the film (as Wu can only speak the language, not write it). Apparently, the love letter was well received.

"She is incredibly supportive now and proud of the film," said Wu.

Because the film alternates between Mandarin dialect

(with subtitles) and English and has many scenes filmed in the Chinese community in Flushing, Queens, it feels like an authentic, insider's glimpse of this seemingly cloistered enclave.

"In Flushing you have more recent waves of immigration so you can actually have enclaves of people who choose to not speak English or don't know how," said Wu. She shot "Saving Face" over 27 days in and around New York City. Her rooftop scenes ("I live in Brooklyn, so I know there are beautiful rooftop views that have nothing to do with the Manhattan skyline"), and even the exterior of Wu's Park Slope-style brownstone, were shot in Greenpoint, she said.

"For this particular story, I actually felt like New York is the only place in the United States to tell it, because the film is so much about a woman who has compartmentalized her world," explained the San Jose, Calif., native.

"The thing about New York is that in a very small geographical location it has thousands of worlds, all right next to each other."

"And it's a walking city, so you have to walk through other people's worlds to get to your own."

"It was very important to me that there be a sense of universality to this experience. It seems like Wil is going through this specific thing in this specific community of Flushing, but it should feel, when she's walking down the street, that the Hasidic Jewish man that passes her or someone on the subway next to her is going through the exact same thing in their community."

"Saving Face" opens in Manhattan this weekend, and the filmmaker hopes the film will open in Brooklyn, too. Whether the film gets a wider release, and whether Wu gets another crack at writing and directing, depends on the first weekend's receipts.

"I'm kind of amazed this film got made at all," Wu said of her five-year endeavor. "I just hope people can enjoy the film a tenth as much as I loved making it with incredible people. Then I'd be happy. And I hope I get to do this again because those 27 days were probably the best days of my life."

CINEMA

"Saving Face" opens at AMC Empire 25 (42nd Street and Eighth Avenue, 212) 398-3939 and Angelika Film Center (18 West Houston St. at Brooklyn, 718) 995-2000 in Manhattan on May 27.

New play gets spotlight

Park Slope's Gallery Players premieres 14 plays in June's 'Black Box New Play Fest'

By Paulanne Simmons
for The Brooklyn Papers

The Gallery Players' eighth annual "Black Box New Play Festival" promises to offer something different this season: a unique theme for each of the four weekends, allowing for a more cohesive theater experience while remaining true to the festival's eclectic spirit. The Festival, produced by Gallery Players President Heather Siobhan Curran runs for four weekends in June.

The first weekend (June 2-5) is titled "Brooklyn Plays-Brooklyn Playwrights," and focuses on people who are residents of Brooklyn or writing about Brooklyn. Curran told GO Brooklyn.

The second weekend (June 9-12) is called "The Sex Box" and, says Curran, "all of the plays explore themes of sexuality." The third weekend (June 16-19), "Heaven and Earth," is a "catch-all," which Curran says includes plays about space-travel (Heaven) and relationships (Earth).

In an effort to reach out to the entire family, the Gallery Players have decided to dedicate the fourth weekend (June 23-26), "The Sandbox," to plays for children.

"It feels good to get children into the theater," says Curran. "They're the future generation of theater-goers."

Michael Bettencourt's one-act, "Only the Dead Know Brooklyn," based on Thomas Wolfe's short story of the same title, will be presented the first weekend. Bettencourt says that he was "inspired" by Wolfe's story but changed the direction by making his play "a quest to know something."

In the original story, a young man wants to go to different areas of Brooklyn because he likes their names. He has just visited Red Hook and wants to go to Bensonhurst. In this story, Bettencourt believes Wolfe is asking "how a writer can know anything completely. And his answer is, 'he can't.'"

In Bettencourt's play, which makes



(Left to right) Chris Speziale (kneeling), Marshall York, Laura Picquado and Ginger Kroll rehearse "The Runaway Birthday and Melvin the Meek" which will play during the final weekend of the Gallery Players' Black Box New Play Festival.

some unexpected twists, he takes the position that "none of us can know everything completely, but as humans we have to try to know something."

The second weekend's program also includes one of Bettencourt's plays: "Sporting Goods." This one-act takes the form of a monologue delivered by a young wrestler during a match.

"The young man is comfortable with his homosexuality because he can get the kind of touch he wants while wrestling, but the man he is wrestling with doesn't know he has those same desires," says Bettencourt. "In the end, the wrestling becomes an emotional wrestling."

Also on the bill that weekend is "Bibbit Bobby Boo," written by Park

Sloper Charlotte Winters. She collaborated with her half-brother, George, to

to acceptance."

Jennifer Palumbo, who also lives in Park Slope, was commissioned to write "The Runaway Birthday and Melvin the Meek" for "The Sandbox" weekend. Palumbo, who is also on the board of the Brooklyn Family Theatre (BFT), first came to Curran's attention through a play she'd written for that group, "How Peanut Butter Met Jelly." BFT co-founder Lorraine Stobbe showed the play to Curran, and Curran liked it so much she asked Palumbo to write a play for the Black Box Festival.

"[The Runaway Birthday and Melvin the Meek] is about a princess who is not going to be queen because her brother, Melvin, gets to be king," Palumbo explains.

"She's a little bitter about that. In order to get more attention, she makes a wish that her birthday is every single day. Everyone in town ages a year every time they celebrate her birthday. Within a year, the king and queen retire and Melvin takes over. Because he's not prepared, he makes terrible decisions."

Aside from Palumbo's play, which was subsidized by the Park Slope Civic Council, the shows in the Black Box Festival are no-frills productions. One set suffices for the entire weekend, with "furniture and set dressing brought in to change locales," says Curran.

But the Gallery Players spend no time and effort when it comes to working with playwrights to develop their ideas.

"Each year I receive better and better plays," says Curran.

"And each year we give our audiences better and better quality productions."

THEATER

The Gallery Players' "Black Box New Play Festival" runs June 2-26 at 199 14th St., between Fourth and Fifth avenues, in Park Slope. Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays at 8 pm and Sundays at 3 pm. "The Sandbox" weekend will have two shows, at 3 pm and 8 pm, on Saturday, June 25. Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$12 for children under 12, and seniors. A festival pass, which admits a patron to one performance on each of the four weekends, can be purchased for \$20. For a full schedule of plays and to make reservations, call (718) 595-0547 or visit www.galleryplayers.com.

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SAT - 6/25 - 7:30

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THUR - 6/30 - 7:30

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FRI - 7/1 - 7:30

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Where to Eat

SAT, MAY 28

Memorial Day Weekend

OUTDOORS AND TOURS

BOAT TOUR: Brooklyn Heritage Society hosts a tour, "Brooklyn's Working Waterfront," \$20, \$18 members, \$12 children of members ages 12 and younger, 11:05 am at Fulton Ferry Landing. (718) 222-4111

GREEN-WOOD CEMETERY: Historic tour explores "Venture to Valley Water." Visits to the restored historic chapel, the Receiving Tomb and gardens as well as monuments. \$10, \$5 for Historic Fund members, 1 pm. Call for meeting location. (631) 549-4991

DOWNTOWN TOUR: Mauricio Lorente leads a tour of historic sites in Fort Greene and Clinton Hill. \$25, 2 pm to 5 pm. Brooklyn Marriott hotel, 333 Adams St. (718) 789-0430

TWILIGHT WALK: Big Onion Tours takes a walk across Brooklyn Bridge and through Brooklyn Heights. \$15, \$12 seniors, \$10 students, 5 pm. Meet at southeast corner of Broadway and Chambers Street, lower Manhattan. (212) 639-1090

MUSIC: Singer Shawn Fogel plays all-country, indie-rock and anti-folk. \$5, 7 pm. Vox Pop, 1022 Cortelyou Road. (718) 940-2384

CAMPING AT THE MARSH: Spend a night under the stars at the Marsh Nature Center. 7 pm. Reservations a must. Call 311 and ask for the Urban Park Rangers. Free.

PERFORMANCE

RED HOOK ART: Brooklyn Waterfront Artists Coalition hosts an afternoon of art and music, featuring a mock battle of the Brooklyn bands. 1 pm to 6 pm. Van Brunt Farm, end of Van Brunt St. Red Hook. (917) 251-4070. Free.

BARGEHOUSE: Classical music concert features an all-Mendelssohn program. \$25, 7:30 pm. Fulton Ferry Landing. (718) 624-2083

DANCE AFRICA: Brooklyn Academy of Music hosts the 26th and African Diaspora dance festival. Activities include dance Africa Bazaar, dance master classes, an African art garden, African films and live music. \$45 to \$20, 2 pm and 7:30 pm. Visit www.bam.org. Also, BAM Cafe presents reggae, ska and R&B. \$10 food and drink minimum, 10 pm. 30 Lafayette Ave. (718) 634-0000

STAGED READINGS: Brooklyn College Department of Theater presents "Each One Teach One," a collection of plays written by Brooklyn high school students. 2 pm to 5 pm and 5 pm to 7 pm. Meet the playwrights reception from 4 pm to 5 pm. New Workshop Theater at Brooklyn College, one block from the intersection of Flatbush and Nostrand avenues. (718) 951-5882. Free.

ST. ANN'S WAREHOUSE: Celebrates a musical festival of new puppet theater with "Lapalooza! 2005." "Purty Tank," a story about a molasses spill in 1917 which killed 22 people and several horses. More. \$20, 5 pm, 30 W. 5th St. (718) 254-8779.

U.S. SOLDER SHOW: Celebrates the musical revue "Operation America Cares," at the Fort Hamilton Park Theater. Performed by soldiers for soldiers, the actors come from 19 separate units and from installations across nine states and Korea. The 90-minute show features a wide range of music from R&B to country. 7 pm. Valid ID required to enter. 610 W. 10th St. Army base. (718) 630-4783. Free.

CHILDREN

BARNES AND NOBLE: Storytime: "Dora the Explorer." 10 am, 106 Court St. (718) 246-4999. Free.

PUPPETWORKS: presents the adventure story "Around the World in 80 Days." \$8, \$7 children, 12:30 pm and 2 pm. 328 South Ave. Reservations suggested. (718) 965-3391.

OTHER

PIER SHOW: Brooklyn Waterfront Artists Coalition hosts its 25th anniversary spring art show. Noon to 6 pm. Red Hook Pier, 499 Van Brunt St. (718) 596-2507. Free.

FASHION MARKET: Brooklyn Designers showcase features emerging designers of handcrafted merchandise. 10:30 am to 3 pm. 157 Montague St. (718) 763-7654

HEALTHY ART: St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church hosts a day of health-related information, performances and vendors. 11 am to 3 pm. Hill Street, between Duane Avenue and Wiloughby Street. (718) 622-5612. Free.

PET ADOPTION: Cats, dogs, kittens and puppies available at American Bank. \$30. Noon to 5 pm. 1430 Shore Parkway. (712) 593-0078.

BANKMENATE: presents "The Best of The African Film Festival." 2 pm, 4:30 pm, 6:30 pm, 8:30 pm, 10:30 pm, 12:30 pm, 2 pm, 4:30 pm, 6:30 pm and 8:30 pm. 30 Lafayette Ave. (718) 594-4440

FILM SERIES: Coney Island Saturday night film series. \$3 includes popcorn. 8:30 pm. Coney Island Mall, 1208 Surf Ave. (718) 372-5159

SINGLES DINNER: Bay Ridge Singles Club hosts a dinner for ages 35 to 60. Call for restaurant information. (718) 745-8659.

SUN, MAY 29

OUTDOORS AND TOURS

CANOEING: Urban Park Rangers explores the lake in Prospect Park. Reservations necessary. 11 am, Call 311 and ask for the Urban Park Rangers. Free.

GREEN-WOOD CEMETERY: This Victorian city of the dead. \$10, \$5 members, 1 pm. Meet at Fourth Avenue Gate and 35th Street. (718) 766-7378

PERFORMANCE

BARGEHOUSE: Classical music concert features an all-Mendelssohn program. \$25, 7:30 pm. Fulton Ferry Landing. (718) 624-2083

BRICK THEATER: presents a comedy about "Absence of Mind." \$10, 7 pm, 275 Metropolitan Ave. (718) 607-3457

DANCE AFRICA: at Brooklyn Academy of Music. 3 pm. See Sat, May 28.

ST. ANN'S WAREHOUSE: "Purty Tank." 3 pm. See Sat, May 28.

PIER SHOW: hosted by Brooklyn Waterfront Artists Coalition. Noon to 6 pm. See Sat, May 28.

LIST YOUR EVENT...

To list your event in Where to Eat, please give us two weeks notice or more. Send your listing by mail: GO Brooklyn, The Brooklyn Papers, 55 Washington St., Suite 624, Brooklyn, NY 11201; or by fax: (718) 834-9278. Listings are free and printed on a space available basis. We regret we cannot take listings over the phone.

Compiled by Susan Rosenthal

perverse and morally bankrupt. \$10. At 7 pm, "Mr. Nobody." At 8:30 pm, "Mahabharata" or "Pachyderm" (a waste recycled paper), written and performed by Chris Hecum and "This is NOT A BURLESQUE: a surrealistic burlesque," directed by Juliet O'Brien and Rosalee Pines. At 9:45 pm, "Freak Out Under the Apple Tree" (Cover of The Best of Tom K. Chao). At 11 pm, "I Came from Mr. Nobody," current and hosted by Michele Carlo. 375 Metropolitan Ave. (718) 268-4444

BLACK BOX: "Black Box New Play Festival." 8 pm. See Sat, June 4.

GREENNET BLOCK CONTEST: Today is dedicated to Brooklyn Botanic Garden's 11th annual Greenest Block in Brooklyn contest. Call (718) 623-7250.

SAT, JUNE 4

OUTDOORS AND TOURS

MARINE PARK ADVENTURE: Explore and help marine. Marine Park. Activities include National Tides Day volunteer event, orienteering, Treasure Hunt, canoe demos and more. 9 am to 1 pm. Salt Marsh Nature Center, 3302 Ave. U. Call 311. Free.

CIVIL WAR ENCAMPMENT: 14th Brooklyn Regiment Co. H and the Sixth New York Independent Battery reenact a performance. Also, historical displays on view. Also, auto cemetery. 10 am to 4 pm. New Ulster Reformed Church, 84th Street and Avenue C. (718) 256-7378. Free.

CROSSING NEWTOWN CREEK: Brooklyn Center for the Urban Environment takes a walk through Greenpoint, across the Pulaski Bridge and through Long Island City. \$11, \$9 members, \$8 seniors and students, 10 am to noon. Meet outside the Greenpoint Avenue station of the G train. (718) 788-8500.

OPEN WALK: Brooklyn Waterfront Artists Coalition hosts its annual Open Walk self-guided walk in Red Hook, Carroll Gardens, Cobble Hill and Boerum Hill. Over 30 artists bring their studios to the public. Noon to 6 pm. 1 pm to 6 pm. Atlantic Avenue. (718) 287-3000. Free.

PIER SHOW: Brooklyn Waterfront Artists Coalition hosts its 25th anniversary spring art show. Noon to 6 pm. Red Hook Pier, 499 Van Brunt St. (718) 596-2507. Free.

BROOKLYN 101: New York Like a Native offers a tour of Park Slope, Prospect Park and Brooklyn Heights. \$15, 1:30 pm to 4 pm. Call for meeting place. (718) 395-7537.

PERFORMANCE

DANCING IN THE PARKS: Parks Foundation and Friends of Coffey Tree present "Dancing in the Parks." Purnoverment. Master class workshop with company members at 2:30 pm. Bernie Harris Purnoverment. 2:30 pm. Flatbush Avenue and Hicks Street. Download tour map at www.dancingintheparks.org. (718) 875-8993. Free.

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SUN, JUNE 5

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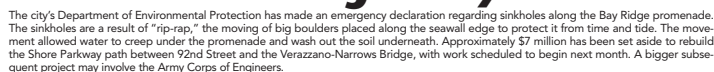
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By Jess Wisloski
The Brooklyn Papers

The city's Law Department did not return calls seeking comment as to whether the motion might insinuate admittance of guilt by the community board.

Alabi's suit demands reinstatement to her position and back pay dating to June 20, 2003.



TheBrooklynBride.com

Red Hook waterfront condo OK'd

Appellate Court's decision has developer eyeing twin property for a new hotel

By Jess Wisloski
The Brooklyn Papers

The conversion of a former warehouse on the Red Hook waterfront into a \$70 million luxury condominium has been given the go-ahead by an appellate panel.

And now, the developer says he may build a hotel in a twin warehouse building next door.

The Appellate Division of the state Supreme Court on May 9 dismissed the suit filed by the Red Hook Gowanus Chamber of Commerce, lifting a stop-work order that had been in effect against the project since November. The action allows the owner and developer of the site, Industry City Associates,

to move forward with its plan to convert the massive former warehouse, which they have already gutted, into condominium apartments featuring some of the most majestic harbor views in the city.

Of the finding on his behalf, Industry City principal owner Bruce Batkin said this week that the court merely affirmed the original — and, he noted, correct — decision by the city Board of Standards and Appeals, rendered on Dec. 23, 2003, to let them build 144 luxury units in the six-story former book-binding warehouse at 160 Imlay St., near Pier 11.

Now, the developer says, he plans not only to re-start development of the condo, but is also considering options in-

cluding a hotel for the twin building next door, 62 Imlay St., for which Industry City has already applied for a zoning variance.

"We've been approached by a number of hotel operators at 62 Imlay St., so between the residential, the retail, the hospitality component and the aesthetic improvement, we think it's going to be a win-win situation for the community, for the city and for us," Batkin told The Brooklyn Papers.

"As well as for the cruise ship lines," he added after a pause. "Certainly Cunard and Princess want to bring their ships into an active, vital area," Batkin said. He said it was too early to discuss what kind of hotel it might be, or if a residential variance might be needed.

"I have letters of intent from a number of hotel groups and that would be mostly in terms of the cruise ships terminal," he said.

"We're obviously going to be working with the cruise ships" in determining what to develop on the ground floor retail space and the Imlay Street twin, he said, referring to the Bloomberg administration's vision of having luxury liners dock at the Red Hook piers.

"Not only are we going to be enhancing the waterfront but we'll be complementing what the city's vision for the new waterfront is," Batkin said.

"It will create a great synergy with what's there. We'll provide basically a wall on the eastern side of the cruise ship terminal that will be, personally, more aesthetically pleasing."

For the ground floor of 160 Imlay St., he said, the company plans to develop retail and restaurant space that could serve tourists coming in from the cruises, as well as possibly gallery space for local artists.

This week, the lawyer for the petitioners, the Red Hook/Gowanus Chamber of Commerce, said the suit was tossed on a technicality — the failure of what he called the chamber's "incompetent" former lawyer to properly file the suit.

"We have thus far been denied a determination on the merits, as the petition was dismissed on a technicality," the chamber's lawyer, Michael Hiller, told The Papers.

A source at the chamber said "further new legal action will be pursued."

The variance, which allowed four of the six stories to convert to residential development, was voted down when it came to Community Board 6 in late 2002. Pasquale Pacifico, executive



The warehouse under construction at 160 Imlay St. in Red Hook in November 2004.

director of the Board of Standards and Appeals, said a variance granted to one building would not affect an application for another building.

"It's gone, it's over with," said Pacifico about 160 Imlay St. "Every other case is an individual site. The BSA is handling individual sites, even if the building is right next door. Even if it is the exact same in every way, it is considered as a separate building."

"Even the building at 160 Imlay St. is not 100 percent," Pacifico added, saying Industry City only got four of the nine stories that had applied for to be made residential. "Everybody's worried about the other building," he said. "But who knew what an uphill battle this would have."

Pacifico also noted that the BSA would have a new chairperson, and at least one, if not two new board members before anything on 62 Imlay St. was likely to come before the five-commissioner panel.

Hiller said that, nonetheless, the precedent set by 160 Imlay St. was already changing Red Hook businesses.

"The displacement of manufacturing companies from Red Hook to places outside the city will lead to both increased distance diesel truck trips and the outsourcing of thousands of valuable blue-collar jobs from the city," the lawyer said.

"The only winner in this situation is the developer's profit

margin," he added.

Hiller explained that the chamber had no recourse against the dismissal of their original suit, which argued the merits of the BSA's approval of the zoning variance.

The chamber's former lawyer, Peter Brightbill, whom the chamber retained in 2003, did not file the suit until one day before the 30-day deadline — Jan. 23, 2004 — despite having been retained before the variance application even made it to the BSA, said Tom Russo, president of the chamber.

And when he did, the motion was missing one crucial item — the name of the condo developer, 160 Imlay Street Real Estate LLC, among the list of respondents.

Hiller said the chamber was unaware of the mistake until it was too late.

"The first we knew of the issue was when the City of New York filed their motion to dismiss (the case), in February of 2004," the lawyer explained.

"We were amazed that a legal professional would make such an obvious omission."

"Mr. Brightbill was retained by the chamber, as he held himself out as an expert in this field," said Hiller. Russo said the attorney was fired in August 2004 once they realized the mistake.

"He didn't appear to be competent," said Russo. "We saw some indications that he really wasn't a professional or as com-

petent as we thought he was."

Russo said Brightbill was recommended by a chamber member.

"I'm sure, supposedly, he had the right qualifications," Russo said of the attorney, who works for the law firm of Stuart Klein, in Manhattan, which specializes in zoning issues.

"But I don't think he was as qualified as he thought he was."

"Now we've got somebody now who knows what he's doing," Russo said of Hiller.

Reached this week, Brightbill declined to comment on the apparent error.

The chamber has not said what action it might take next.

"There is a 30-day statute of limitations to challenge a BSA decision," Hiller said. "Given that Mr. Brightbill filed deficient papers on the final day of the deadline, the owners of 160 Imlay St. have so far been handed a free ticket. Despite their difficulties, we will continue to aggressively challenge this illegal variance, and are confident we will prevail. This isn't over."

Batkin said the continued legal argument was a fool's errand, adding that his plan for development would benefit the surrounding community as well.

"We're focused on the waterfront at this point, so we consider this project to be part of the fabric of the new waterfront and we're not looking to have any sort of profound impact on the workings of the waterfront," said the developer.

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